

Notice of Allowability

Application No.

10/015,376

Examiner

Calvin L Hewitt II

Applicant(s)

SANSONE, RONALD P.

Art Unit

3621

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to 23 September 2004.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 1-5,7 and 10-17.
3. ☒ The drawings filed on 12 December 2001 are accepted by the Examiner.
4. ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:
 1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.
THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

5. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
 6. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
 - (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
 - 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
 - (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
7. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. ☒ Information Disclosure Statements (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08),
Paper No./Mail Date 12-12-01
4. ☐ Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit
of Biological Material
5. ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6. ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413),
Paper No./Mail Date _____
7. ☒ Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. ☒ Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. ☐ Other _____

Status of Claims

1. An Examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this Examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Ronald Reichman on 23 September 2004.

2. Claims 1-17 have been examined.

3. The Application has been amended as follows-

Claims 6, 8 and 9 have been canceled.

Amend claims 1, 7, and 10 as follows:

1. (Once Amended) An incoming mail monitoring system, said system comprises:

a plurality of identification cards that contain a code that uniquely identify mailers;

a plurality of receptacles that reads and stores the unique identifying number contained in the card after [the] mail is entered into the interior of the receptacle; and

a data center that stores the unique code and receives the unique code from the receptacles to determine if the mailer is permitted to enter mail in the receptacle[.];

wherein each of said plurality of receptacles comprises:

a slot for entering mail into a control chamber;

modern means for determining whether the entered mail is suspected of having life-harming material;

means for closing the slot when the mail in the control chamber is determined as suspect mail; and

an inner chamber that receives mail from the control chamber that is determined not to be suspect mail.

7. (Once amended) The system claimed in claim [6] 5, wherein the inner chamber has a locked door in which when open mail may be removed from the inner chamber.
10. (Once amended) The system claimed in claim [8] 7, further comprising means for indicating a message indicating the status of the receptacle.

Reasons for Allowance

4. Claims 1-5, 7 and 10-17 have been allowed.

5. The present invention is dedicated to secure mailing. Specifically, the instant Application provides security through the use of mailer authentication and receptacles with multiple chambers. Felice et al. (US 6,789,727) teaches mail security through a receptacle sealing mechanism that seals deposited mail. Ramsden et al. (US 5,656,799) teach a receptacle with a first chamber for receiving mail and second chamber for storing the mail. The Ramsden et al. system further teaches analyzing the mail to determine its validity by checking its physical specifications then locking an outer door to allow the mail to enter into a second chamber (figure 18B; column/line 19/65-20/67). The Ramsden et al. system also checks if the mail was switched on its way from the first chamber to the second chamber (figure 18B; column/line 21/37-22/10). Initially, the prior art of Ramsden et al. appears to teach the Applicant's invention. However, there are several notable differences. Applicant's claimed invention closes *"the slot when the mail in the control chamber is determined as suspect mail"* thereby trapping the mail in the control chamber. This differs from Ramsden et al. who teach an opposing method, one where a door is locked when the package has been **accepted** for mailing ('799, column 21, lines 60-67). Further, Ramsden et al. use cameras and the like to determine the validity of a package, that is to say package validation occurs within the receptacle (column/line 21/37-22/10).

Therefore, Ramsden et al. teach away from using *modem means for determining*

whether the entered mail is suspected of having life-harming material as such a modification would result in inefficient package processing as all of the data resides within the receptacle. Email filter systems (McCormick et al.- US 6,023,723 and Cotton-US 6,330,590) do not teach the structure of the Applicant's claimed receptacle. And none of the sighted prior art teach *determining whether the entered mail is suspected of having life-harming material*. Therefore, the prior art singly, or in combination do not teach the present invention.

Conclusion

6. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure:
 - Van Till et al. teach a secure system for accessing unattended storage
 - Gil et al. an automated self-service mail processing and storing system
7. Any comments considered necessary by Applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

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8. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the Examiner should be directed to Calvin Loyd Hewitt II whose telephone number is (703) 308-8057. The Examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday from 8:30 AM-5:00 PM.

If attempts to reach the Examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the Examiner's supervisor, James P. Trammell, can be reached at (703) 305-9768.

Any response to this action should be mailed to:

Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks

c/o Technology Center 2100

Washington, D.C. 20231

or faxed to:

(703) 305-7687 (for formal communications intended for entry and after-final communications),

or:

(703) 746-5532 (for informal or draft communications, please label "PROPOSED" or "DRAFT")

Hand-delivered responses should be brought to Crystal Park 5, 2451 Crystal Drive, 7th Floor Receptionist.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application should be directed to the Group receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-1113.

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Calvin Loyd Hewitt II

September 24, 2004